



City of Seattle

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Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor  
**Department of Design, Construction and Land Use**  
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE  
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR  
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND USE**

**Application Number:** 2208251  
**Applicant Name:** Bernand Hou  
**Address of Proposal:** 2001 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Master Use Permit to change use from Administrative Office to Utility Service Use on a portion of the tenth floor of an existing 34-story downtown highrise office building. The L-shaped area of 12,584 square feet will be in the northwest portion of the tenth floor along the inside of the north and the west exterior walls of the building. Associated equipment for computer system, air conditioning system, backup battery system, including accessory office spaces will be installed within the confines of the floor area and the existing exterior walls of the structure. The proposed project site is in downtown zone DOC-2 300.

**SEPA DETERMINATION:**      ☐ Exempt   ☐ DNS   ☐ MDNS   ☐ EIS  
  
   ☒ DNS with conditions  
  
   ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or  
   involving another agency with jurisdiction.

**BACKGROUND DATA**

Site and Area Description

The subject property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Virginia Street within the Downtown Office Core (DOC-2) zone. The subject site is bounded by

a fifteen-foot (15') wide alley to the west, an existing structure (United Airlines Bldg.) on the adjacent property to the north, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east, and Virginia Street to the south.

### Development in the Vicinity

To the north of the site, the developments are mostly commercial establishments, hotels, residential apartments and some surface parking lots. Farther north beyond Lenora Street, developments are mostly mixed use of residential and commercial establishments within the DMC zone. Across 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east are also hotels, business establishments and surface parking lots. To the south is the Westin Hotel and several office buildings and then to the west across the existing alley is the Westin Hotel Building Garage. Farther west beyond 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue development is mostly business establishments and residential apartments within the DMC zone.

### Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to change the use of the portion of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor (12,584 sq. ft. in area) from the existing Administrative Office to a Utility Service Use for the future installation of telephone/computer equipment (no transmitting equipment shall be installed) and arrays of internet disk servers. Air conditioning systems which would include ductwork and an array of backup batteries containing more than 100 gallons of electrolyte are also proposed to be installed. All of this various equipment proposed to be installed shall be located within the confines of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor of the existing building.

### Public Comments

The public comment period for this project ended on January 8, 2003. No written comment was received, nor was any request for extension of comment period filed.

### SEPA ANALYSIS

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated November 20, 2002 and annotated by the Department. This information in the checklist, supplemental information provided by the applicant (floor plans and details) and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between the codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states, in part: *"Where City regulations have been adopted to address environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation,"* subject to some limitations. Thus, the mitigation that may be required pursuant to SEPA authority is limited.

## Short Term Impacts

### Construction and Noise

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality within the confines of the 10<sup>th</sup> floor area due to suspended particles and dust from construction activities which will involve drilling of anchor holes on the existing floor for the computer equipment cabinets; increased noise due to hauling of construction materials, equipment, installation and anchoring of equipment to the floor with potential impact to occupied floors below and above the 10<sup>th</sup> floor; increased traffic and demand for parking from the construction personnel. Conduits for power service connection to the computer equipment will be installed above the equipment cabinets and will be anchored mostly beneath the ceiling and above the computer equipment cabinets. Noise from the installation of drilled-in concrete anchors will be generated during normal construction hours. No noise would be generated during equipment operation.

Due to the fact that these activities are all within the confines of the building, the construction activities would not create significant adverse impacts to nearby building occupants. Several adopted codes and ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. The Building Code provides for construction measures in general. The Noise Ordinance regulates the time and amount of construction noise that is permitted in the City.

### Air Quality

The construction activities will generate minimal impacts and will be contained basically within the building. No potential short term adverse impact to air is anticipated and therefore air quality mitigation is not necessary.

### Traffic and Parking

Due to telephone/computer equipment and limited number of construction materials delivery activities, traffic in the immediate vicinity to the site may be temporarily impacted during regular work hours. Delivery activities before or after peak hours, and the use of the existing alley adjacent to the west of the site would provide adequate mitigation of traffic impact in the vicinity. Construction activities for this proposal would only require minimal number of construction personnel. The parking garage of the Westin Hotel to the south across Virginia Street with pedestrian access through an existing sky bridge serving this building facility and the Westin Hotel Building garage across the alley to the west are adequate to accommodate the temporary parking need for the construction personnel. Further mitigation of this parking impact is not warranted.

## Long Term Impacts

### Environmental Health

This utility service facility proposes to use backup power for the computer equipment by utilizing an array of lead-acid batteries that will contain more than 100 gallons of electrolyte. The applicant submitted documentation of approval from the Seattle Fire Department addressing the health hazards that the batteries, pose and complying with the requirements of the Seattle Fire Code article 64. The Department finds that the limitations and requirements of the Fire Ordinance are adequate to appropriately mitigate the adverse health impact of the hazardous material including fire hazards associated with this proposal. No transmitting equipment will be used in this proposal, and no EMR or radio frequency emissions are anticipated, no mitigation measures are warranted pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665).

### Visual

No visual impact is anticipated associated with this proposal. All of the telephone/computer system, disk servers system, racks and cabinets, array of backup batteries and its containment walls, air conditioning systems and duct work, conduits and raceways for the electrical systems and all other related equipment for the proposal will be all located within the confines of 10<sup>th</sup> floor of the existing structure. No mitigation for visual impacts is warranted.

### DECISION

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

[X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined not to have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

### CONDITIONS

None.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Edgardo R Manlangit, Land Use Planner  
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use  
Land Use Division

ERM:vw

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